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**NEW YORKERS CHARGED WITH PASSING COUNTERFEIT CURRENCY
IN BERKS COUNTY STORES**

PHILADELPHIA - Yessina Lavayen, Joseph Lombardi (a/k/a “Marc Ayed”), and Cesar Malo, residents of New York State, were charged today by indictment¹ with conspiracy in a fraud scheme involving counterfeit money, announced United States Attorney Zane David Memeger. The indictment charges one count of conspiracy to commit an offense against the United States and nine counts of uttering counterfeit currency.

According to the indictment, the defendants took \$5,000 worth of counterfeit \$100 bills and passed them around in stores at Berks County shopping malls, making minor purchases with the bills as a means to get authentic currency in exchange. The indictment details nine transactions in which the defendants received at least \$85 in change for their purchase.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANTS

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE OR YEAR OF BIRTH
Yessina Lavayen	New York, New York	8/18/1990
Joseph Lombardi (a/k/a “Marc Ayed”)	New York, New York	10/25/1989
Cesar Malo	Corona, New York	8/20/1986

If convicted, the defendants face a statutory maximum sentence of 180 years of in prison, a fine of \$2.250 million dollars, a special assessment of \$1,000 and 3 years of supervised release.

The case was investigated by the United States Secret Service’s Philadelphia Field Division and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Floyd J. Miller.

¹An Indictment or Information is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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